

B₁ amended
electron beam, and is applied in air, an inactive gas, or a vacuum.

8. (Amended) A semiconductor device having interconnects formed by a method of forming a thin metal film according to claim 1.

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13. (Amended) An apparatus for forming a thin metal film according to claim 9, wherein said devices are sequentially arranged in an indoor facility along a direction in which the substrate moves.

14. (Amended) An apparatus for forming a thin metal film according to claim 9, wherein said devices are accommodated individually in respective chambers disposed radially around a central transfer chamber with a transfer robot disposed therein.

REMARKS

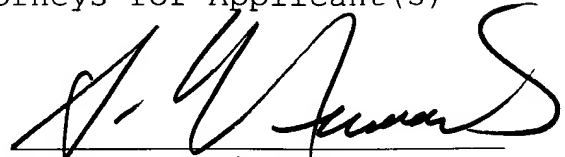
The above amendments are made to eliminate improper multi-dependencies consistent with 37 CFR 1.75(c) in order to insure examination of all of applicants' claims. The amendments are not "narrowing" amendments. The scope of the claims has not been changed; no limitations have been added and none are intended.

Applicants respectfully await the results of a first examination on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

BROWDY AND NEIMARK, P.L.L.C.
Attorneys for Applicant(s)

By



Sheridan Neimark
Registration No. 20,520

SN:jec
Telephone No.: (202) 628-5197
Facsimile No.: (202) 737-3528
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"Version with Markings to Show Changes Made"

7. (Amended) A method of forming a thin metal film according to ~~any one of claims 1 through 6~~, wherein said energy beam comprises an electron beam, and is applied in air, an inactive gas, or a vacuum.

8. (Amended) A semiconductor device having interconnects formed by a method of forming a thin metal film according to ~~any one of claims 1 through 7~~.

13. (Amended) An apparatus for forming a thin metal film according to ~~any one of claims 8 through 12~~ claim 9, wherein said devices are sequentially arranged in an indoor facility along a direction in which the substrate moves.

14. (Amended) An apparatus for forming a thin metal film according to ~~any one of claims 8 through 12~~ claim 9, wherein said devices are accommodated individually in respective chambers disposed radially around a central transfer chamber with a transfer robot disposed therein.